Prevention of road accidents

1511. DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that thirteen persons die every hour in road accidents in the country and that more people suffer fatal injuries thereby; and

(b) if so, what precautions Government will take to prevent the accidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI MAHADEV S. KHANDELA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The safety of road users is primarily the responsibility of the concerned State Government. However, this Ministry has taken several steps to improve road safety for road users which are as under:

(i) Road safety is an integral part of road design at the planning stage for National Highways/Expressways.

(ii) Various steps to enhance road safety such as road furniture, road markings/road signs, introduction of Highway Traffic Management System using Intelligent Transport System, enhancement of discipline among contractors during construction, road safety audit on selected stretches, have been undertaken by National Highways Authority of India.

(iii) Refresher training to Heavy Motor Vehicle drivers in the unorganized sector being implemented by the Ministry since 1997-98 under plan activities.

(iv) Involvement of NGOs for road safety activities by Ministry of Road Transport and Highways and National Highways Authority of India.

(v) Setting up of Driving Training School in the country.

(vi) Publicity campaign on road safety awareness both through the audio-visual and print media.

(vii) Institution of National Award for voluntary organizations/individual for outstanding work in the field of road safety.

(viii) Tightening of safety standards of vehicles.

(ix) Providing cranes and ambulances to various State Governments/NGOs under National Highway Accident Relief Service Scheme. National Highways Authority of India also provides ambulances at a distance of 50 Km. on each of its completed stretches of National Highways under its Operation and Maintenance contracts.

(x) Widening and improvements of National Highways from 2 lanes to 4 lanes and 4 lanes to 6 lanes etc.

Increase in vehicular traffic on Indian roads

1512. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of vehicles on Indian roads is increasing rapidly particularly when about 12 lakh vehicles per year are produced and brought to use in India;

(b) if so, whether the existing roads can afford to absorb this heavy vehicular traffic; and

(c) whether this serious threat and problem has been taken cognizance after making a thorough study of the problem at present and in future, if so, the long term and short term measures taken with particular reference to major Metro Cities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI MAHADV S. KHANDELA): (a) As per the latest information available, the number of registered vehicles as on 31.3.2006 was around 896.18 lakh. On an average, the number of registered vehicles has been growing at the rate of 10% per annum during the last few years.

(b) and (c) This Ministry is only responsible for development and maintenance of National Highways. Some sections of National Highways suffer congestion due to high volume of traffic and inadequate carriage way width. Upgradation in terms of capacity augmentation of National Highways is a continuous process and sections of National Highways are considered for such augmentation depending upon the traffic volume as well as the future growth of traffic. As regards other roads, the State Governments are responsible for upgradation and maintenance of the same. The State Governments are also responsible for taking measures to meet the growing demand of road space specifically with respect to the roads within the urban areas.

Construction of road from Belgaum to Goa

1513. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the tender and other process with respect to construction of road from Belgaum to Goa has been completed;

(b) the length of the proposed road;

(c) the estimated/tendered cost; and

(d) by when the project is proposed to be completed and details thereof?